REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4 to 8, 17, 19, 27, 28, 31, 32, 38 to 40, 42 to 44, 47, 50, 51, 53, 54 and 56 to 71 are pending.

Claims 27, 28, 31, 32, 42, 47, 50, 51, 56, 59 and 60 are allowed. Claims 67 to 71 are new.

1. Claims 1, 2, 4 to 8, 43, 44, 53, 54, 57 and 58 are rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph. Independent claims 1, 43, 57 and 58 have been amended to call for the "casing of titanium comprising an interior surface layer consisting essentially of titanium oxide." Support for these claim amendments is found, in part, in the specification at page 4, line 22 to page 5, line 13. There, the Applicants discuss the basis of the claimed invention being "directed to a conditioned titanium metal substrate having a substantially thickened outer oxidation layer provided by a treatment process performed in an oxygen-containing atmosphere at elevated temperatures, or through electrolytic oxidation (anodization). Upon subsequent elevated temperature exposure, the conditioned titanium substrate serving as a cathode current collector incorporated into an electrochemical cell exhibits improved electrical performance in comparison to titanium substrates manufactured by prior art techniques, i.e., electrically conductive carbon coated titanium screens and use of highly corrosion resistant alloys other than titanium. In fact, improved discharge performance is maintained even after the cell has been subjected to several high temperature exposures. The oxide thickening treatment of this invention is practical and economical; in its simplest form the treatment consists of heating screens or stock in a furnace containing an air atmosphere." Then, at page 12, lines 20 to 24,

the specification states that the "titanium casing can be conditioned in a manner according to the present invention."

Those skilled in the art are well aware that the casing is a "substrate" that according to the present invention has "a substantially thickened outer oxidation layer". In case-negative cell designs, the casing serves as the negative terminal. So in order to benefit the cell's discharge performance, the titanium oxide layer must be on at least the "interior surface layer" of the casing. It may also be on the casing outer surface layer, but that likely would not benefit discharge performance. In that light, the present amendments to independent claims 1, 43, 57 and 58 are believed to remove any ambiguity which may have existed in them.

Reconsideration of this rejection is requested.

2. Claims 17, 19 and 38 to 40 are rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. The dependency of these claims has been amended to remove any indefiniteness that may have existed in them.

Reconsideration of this rejection is requested.

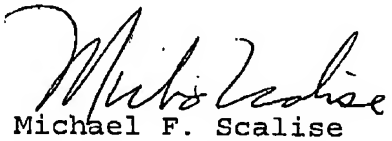
3. Claims 1, 2, 4 to 8, 43, 44, 53, 54 and 58 are rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Independent claim 1, 43, 57 and 58 have been amended to call for the "casing of titanium comprising an interior surface layer consisting essentially of titanium oxide." This is believed to remove any indefiniteness which may have existed in them.

Reconsideration of this rejection is requested.

4. The Applicants acknowledge the allowance of claims 27, 28, 31, 32, 50, 51, [56], 59 and 60.

It is believed that claims 1, 2, 4 to 8, 17, 19, 27, 28, 30 to 32 and 38 to 40, 42 to 44, 47, 50, 51, 53, 54 and 56 to 71 are now in condition for allowance. Notice of Allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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